



PARENT-ATHLETE-COACH ALLIANCE STUDY GUIDE

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PARENT-ATHLETE-COACH ALLIANCE

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PARENT-ATHLETE-COACH ALLIANCE

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PARENT-ATHLETE-COACH ALLIANCE

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“Sports do not build character; they reveal it.”

-- Haywood Hale Broun

PREFACE

On behalf of Drake University Continuing Education and Professional Development and Championship Productions, I am pleased to present our distance learning course: “Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance” (EDMA 175). This one hour graduate credit course is a part of our **REAL COACHING** series for teachers who coach and coaches who teach.

It is no secret that successful sport programs are led by men and women who understand the role that parents play in the educational equation. I know that you will be pleased with the information that Tom Keating, Greg Dale and the panelists provide in the DVD that accompanies the study guide. By enrolling in this course, you will learn from the best and have practical suggestions to use in your immediate areas. The convenient distance learning format will help you to complete the reading and viewing at your convenience.

As you view, discuss, review and respond to the ideas and activities in this course, be encouraged by the team “behind the scenes”. Drake University and Championship Production partners believe that we are making a national impact on the preparation and re-education of America’s coaches. If you are pleased with this class, please tell your friends. If not, please tell me!

Thank you for your enrollment at Drake University.

Dr. Janet M. McMahon
Former Dean, School of
Education Drake
University

EDMA 175

PARENT-ATHLETE-COACH ALLIANCE

A course designed to assist coaches in developing strategies to foster positive, effective relationships with the parents of the athletes they coach.

One Semester Hour of Graduate Credit

Course Materials:

1 Important Information Download

**1 Study Guide (pdf) Download
with Related Readings**

**1 MS Word Document Download
with Answer Pages for Word Processing**

1 DVD to be sent to you



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"Set aside your dreams for your children, and help them attain their own dreams."

-- Author Unknown

"Sports and other forms of vigorous physical activity provide educational experience which cannot be duplicated in the classroom. They are an uncompromising laboratory in which we must think and act quickly and efficiently under pressure and then force us to meet our own inadequacies face to face -- and to do something about them -- as nothing else does. In any athletic activity we are thrown upon our own resources to succeed in the face of a strong and immediate challenge. Sports resembles life in capsule form and the participant quickly learns that his/her performance depends upon the development of strength, stamina, self-discipline and a sure and steady judgment."

- Supreme Court Justice Byron "Whizzer" White -
University of Colorado '38

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Drake University's Division of Distance Learning, part of the School of Education, Continuing Education and Professional Development, provides educational outreach to K-12 educators. Drake's Distance Learning Department offers video and online courses designed for coaches who teach and teachers who coach. They are:

Video Courses

- Theory of Coaching - EDMA 171
- Ethics in Sports - EDMA 172
- The Teaching Coach - EDMA 173
- Adapted Physical Education - EDMA 174
- Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance - EDMA 175
- Step Up and Lead – EDMA 176
- Team Building for Success – EDMA 177
- Relevant Elementary Physical Education – EDMA 272
- Real Coaching II: Honing the Competitive Edge – EDMA 277
- Rev Up the Revolution: Your Middle School PE Game Plan – EDMA 278

Online Courses

- Real Coaching II: Honing the Competitive Edge – EDMA 250
- The Mental Edge: Applied Sports Psychology for Coaches – EDMA 251
- High School PE: Putting National Standards into Action – EDMA 252

Your learning experience in the Distance Learning Division is enhanced with the professional support of evaluators who have been trained in course assessment and in current related issues. We offer telephone and online support for any questions you may have regarding the completion of your course work.

Drake University School of Education
Continuing Education and Professional Development
Distance Learning
2702 Forest Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50311
1-800-768-3224
<http://www.drake.edu/cepd/>

Championship Productions

Every person at Championship Productions is directly tied to carrying out our mission, which is “helping individuals and teams achieve success and realize their fullest potential.” We carry out this mission by producing high-quality instructional products featuring renowned professionals in every sport and by providing the best customer service in the industry. The foundation of our mission is built on teamwork, personal improvement, a positive attitude, and a commitment to excellence.

Since 1976, Championship Productions has produced thousands of instructional DVDs, videos and books for coaches, athletes, and parents all over the world. The company has evolved over the years, from a single sport company, selling primarily books, to an internationally-recognized leader in producing the highest quality instructional products in over 20 sports and providing the top customer service of any company, in any industry, anywhere!

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Welcome to “The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance” (EDMA 175)

Welcome to “The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance,” a unique video course offered by Drake University Continuing Education and Professional Development. In partnership with Championship Productions, we’re proud to offer you thoughtful and challenging presentations intended to help you forge lasting alliances. If you are an aspiring coach or a former coach not currently assigned to a team, you will be able to adjust your homework lessons to your actual situation.

The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance course is designed to assist coaches in developing strategies to foster positive, effective relationships with the parents of the athletes they coach. Course materials will guide coaches to explore changing backgrounds and roles of coaches and parents, identify various family dynamics, and to examine the perspectives of coaches, parents, athletes and administrators. The course will also help coaches develop effective communication strategies to use with parents, and ways to encourage appropriate parent involvement in their programs. Students will complete readings and view video presentations from leading experts in the field and apply what they’ve learned to their own programs. Practical application assignments are included.

In this course you will combine video viewing with readings of related articles to refine and strengthen your style of coaching. You will be asked to apply the insights you gain to your own programs’ needs and resources to help create stronger alliances among parents, athletes and coaches.

Course Description This course is designed to assist coaches in developing strategies to foster positive, effective relationships with parents of the athletes they coach. Course materials will guide coaches to explore changing backgrounds and roles of coaches and parents; identify various family dynamics; and to examine the perspectives of coaches, parents, athletes and administrators. The course will also help coaches develop effective communication strategies to use with parents and ways to encourage appropriate parent involvement in their programs.

Presentation Responses are the first series of questions in each module and they are based on the readings and video presentations. At the beginning of each module you will find a listing of the readings and video presentations upon which the “Presentation Response” questions will be based. These questions will require you to demonstrate the knowledge gained through the readings and DVDs.

Application Exercises are the second series of questions in each module and are based on applying ideas to your specific coaching circumstances. These questions will require you to apply the knowledge obtained in each module to your personal experience as a coach and to your planning for a successful program.

You are encouraged to follow this sequence in using course materials:

1. Read the instructions for each module in this Study Guide, noting the learning objectives and the related questions at the end of each module.
2. View the corresponding videos and read the assigned text readings, (if applicable), taking detailed notes on each presentation.
3. Complete the corresponding assignments in the Study Guide.

Evaluation Criteria Your coursework will be evaluated based on your ability to thoughtfully reflect on the presentations of “The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance,” and to apply those concepts to your specific needs and resources. Points are awarded on your ability to:

- **Respond with insight, clarity and precision (cite specific text/video passages)**
- **Respond in relevant illustrative detail (include specific, observable examples)**
- **Write competently at the graduate level (word-processed, proofread document)**

The five modules and the Final Project for EDMA 175 “The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance” are worth a total of 120 points, based on your responses to the “Presentation Responses” and “Application Exercises” for each of the five modules and the Final Project.

Your final letter grade corresponds with the following percentages of total points earned:

- A 90 – 100%**
- B 80 - 89%**
- C 70 - 79%**
- D 60 - 69%**
- F 59% and lower**

Completion Procedures The cover page, word-processed responses to the Presentation Responses and Application Exercises and the Final Project are the only portions of your coursework that you need to submit to Drake University for evaluation.

**The DVD must be returned to: Drake Distance Learning Fulfillment
2730 Graham Street
Ames, IA 50010**

You are required to word process your coursework before it is submitted for final grading. The MS Word document “Course Study Guide Answer Pages” is provided for your convenience in word processing. It contains the cover page, answer pages for the assignment questions and the Final Project.

Make sure to keep a copy of the final file submitted as a backup. We are not responsible for materials that do not reach our office.

**No printed coursework will be accepted for any reason.
Your coursework must be submitted electronically.**

**PLEASE PROOFREAD ALL OF YOUR WORD-PROCESSED RESPONSES
CAREFULLY BEFORE SUBMITTING!**

Coursework Submission:

Please see the first download called “Important Information” from your “Welcome” email for the procedure and portal submission link.

Course Evaluation Please complete the online Course Evaluation after you have finished your coursework. The link is at the end of the MS Word document “Course Study Guide Answer Pages.” We value your input and will implement your suggestions in future offerings.

If you have any questions please call our office at 1-800-768-3224.

EDMA 175 The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance

Guide to Video Presentations

MODULE ONE (with Tom Keating)

“Changing Roles” 4:08 - 10:30

“What Parents Want” 10:42 – 13:05

MODULE TWO (with Tom Keating)

“Getting Parents Involved” 13:15 – 14:20

“Communication with Parents” 14:30 – 20:15

MODULE THREE (with Greg Dale)

“Understanding Family Dynamics” 20:30 – 49:10

MODULE FOUR (with Joe Callahan, Jim Jarchow, Danny Goettel, Tom Lilly and Mark Ehlers)

“View and Insights” 49:30 – 1:33:00

MODULE FIVE (with Tom Keating)

“Proactive Strategies” 1:33:30 – 1:39:45

“Bringing It All Together” 1:40:00

Readings included in Study Guide

“Parental Parameters” by Lois Schmidt

“The Parent Team” by Lem Elway

“Educating the Parents” by David Hoch

“Positive Psychology” by David Hoch

EDMA 175 PARENT ATHLETE COACH ALLIANCE

**PLEASE use this sheet as a cover page for your completed
Study Guide Assignments**

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Drake ID #

Home Address

City

State

Zip Code

Coaching or Teaching Position Held/Grade Level

Years Taught

Home Telephone

School Telephone

E-mail address

I am enrolled in: Fall 20__

Spring 20__

Summer 20__

MODULE ONE - CURRENT PERSPECTIVES AND CHANGING ROLES

How are the parents of today's athlete different from those of twenty or more years ago? How has the role of the athletic coach changed in that same time period? What challenges do these changes present for parents, athletes and coaches? What is it that parents want for their child in an athletic experience? How can we attempt to incorporate what parents want into the experience without compromising the important elements that coaches believe are necessary to develop successful athletes/teams?

Readings: None

Video Segments: 1) "Changing Roles" 2) "What Parents Want"

Learning Objectives: To provide an overview for the foundation of the coach-athlete-parent alliance; to explore the changing roles for coaches and the parents of athletes over the past twenty years; to determine what parents of athletes want for the sons and daughters through an athletic experience; to examine what parents are looking for in a coach.

Responses to Video Presentation and Readings/Application of Ideas: Use the MS Word document "Course Study Guide Answer Pages" provided for your convenience in word processing.

Presentation Responses and Application Exercises

Module One

Responses to Video Presentations (10 pts.):

A-1) From the video segment entitled "Changing Roles," summarize the ways in which the role of the parent of an athlete has changed over the past twenty years:

A-2) Summarize the ways in which the role of coach has changed over the past twenty years:

B-1) From the video segment entitled "What Parents Want," explain what parents are hoping their students receive through an athletic experience:

Application Question (10 pts.):

C) Interview a coach with at least twenty years of experience regarding the changing roles of parents and coaches since he/she began coaching. What insight did you gain from the interview that will assist you in developing a positive parent-athlete-coach alliance?

MODULE TWO – TEAMING UP WITH PARENTS

How important is timely communication with parents? What is the difference between proactive communication and “clean up” communication? In what ways can coaches effectively communicate with the parents of the athletes they coach? Why is it important to find a way to provide positive opportunities for the parents of athletes to become involved in the athletic program? What strategies for involvement seem to work best?

Readings : “Parental Parameters” by Lois Schmidt, from Volleyball USA.
(www.usavolleyball.org).

“The Parent Team” by Lem Elway, originally published in Coaching Management.

Video Segment: 1) “Getting Parents Involved” 2) “Communication With Parents”

Learning Objectives: To examine the need to effectively communicate with parents; to understand the importance of getting parents involved; to discern the difference between positive involvement and disruption to a program: to identify strategies to get parents involved in the program.

Responses to Video Presentation and Readings/Application of Ideas: Use the MS Word document “Course Study Guide Answer Pages” provided for your convenience in word processing.

Presentation Responses and Application Exercises

Module Two

Responses to Readings (5 pts.):

A1) From the reading "Parental Parameters" identify four areas regarding an athlete's performance that parents focus on:

A2) Compare parents who use pressure to those who use encouragement in each of the four areas identified above:

B1) From the reading "The Parent Team" explain the role of the coach, parent and players:

B2) What guidelines are suggested for lines of communication?

B3) What guidelines are suggested for a parent-coach meeting?

Responses to Video Presentations (5 pts.):

C) From the video segment entitled "Getting Parents Involved," in what ways might parents be involved in a program in a productive way?

D) From the video segment entitled "Communicating with Parents," why is it important that you establish positive communication with parents?

Application Assignment (10 pts.):

E) Citing two concepts from the readings and/or video presentations for this module, explain two areas in which you could involve parents in your program:

MODULE THREE – UNDERSTANDING FAMILY DYNAMICS

What types of families do our athletes come from? What effect does the type of family have on the athletes we work with? What behaviors can we expect from each type of family? What strategies can we employ to work with each type of family?

Readings: None

Video Segment: “Understanding Family Dynamics” (The Coach-Parent-Athlete Triangle with Greg Dale.)

Learning Objectives: To better understand the role that family dynamics plays in the Parent-Athlete-Coach alliance; to identify the specific behaviors associated with the types of families coaches encounter in working with athletes; to develop effective strategies in working with each type of family coaches encounter.

Responses to Video Presentation and Readings/Application of Ideas: Use the MS Word document “Course Study Guide Answer Pages” provided for your convenience in word processing.

Presentation Responses and Application Exercises

Module Three

Responses to Video Presentations (10 pts.):

A) Describe the characteristics of the “over-involved” family as identified by Greg Dale:

B) What steps would you take to work with the “over-involved” family as identified by Greg Dale?

C) Describe the characteristics of the “under-involved” family as identified by Greg Dale:

D) What steps would you take to work with the “under-involved” family as identified by Greg Dale?

E) Describe the characteristics of the “well-balanced” family as identified by Greg Dale. How would you work with such a family?

Application Question (10 pts.):

F) Explain a situation you’ve encountered involving one of the three family types described by Greg Dale. How did you deal with the situation? Now that you’ve heard some situations, what would you attempt to do differently?

MODULE FOUR – VIEWS AND INSIGHTS

What view of the athletic experience do parents have? What view does the coach have? What view does the athletic administrator have? What are the common goals? What are the common challenges? What are the effective strategies used by each?

Readings: None

Video Presentation: “Views and Insights” (Perspectives of parents, coaches, administrators)

Learning Objectives: To provide a variety of perspectives regarding the Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance; to better understand the beliefs that coaches, parents and administrators hold regarding the athletic experience; to identify the challenges that coaches face in the working with the parents of athletes; to identify strategies to meet those challenges.

Responses to Video Presentation and Readings/Application of Ideas: Use the MS Word document “Course Study Guide Answer Pages” provided for your convenience in word processing.

Presentation Responses and Application Exercises

Module Four

Responses to Video Presentations (10 pts.):

Summarize the perspective of coaches, parents and administrators regarding:

A) How the role of athlete's parents has changed in the past twenty years? What significance does that change hold for coaches?

B) How the role of coaches changed in the past twenty years?

C) What parents want from their children's athletic experience?

D) The challenges coaches face in working with parents of athletes they coach:

E) Effective strategies used to promote a positive parent-athlete-coach alliance:

F) What parents expect from coaches:

Application Question (10 pts.):

G) Based on the perspective of the coaches, parents and administrators presented in this module, what do you consider to be the biggest challenge(s) to forming successful parent-athlete-coach alliances in your program? Describe in some detail your ideas to help meet those challenges.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

MODULE FIVE – PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

What does it take to promote the positive Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance? What specific steps can we incorporate in our programs to encourage effective strategy and positive involvement by parents?

Readings: "Educating the Parents," David Hoch, Scholastic Coach and Athletic Director;
"Positive Psychology with Parents," David Hoch, Scholastic Coach and Athletic Director.

Video Presentations: 1) "Proactive Strategies" 2) "Bringing It All Together"

Learning Objectives: To identify specific strategies that coaches can use to promote a positive Parent-Athlete-Coach alliance; to reinforce the importance of communication and expectations.

Responses to Video Presentation and Readings/Application of Ideas: Use the MS Word document "Course Study Guide Answer Pages" provided for your convenience in word processing.

Presentation Responses and Application Exercises

Module Five

Responses to Readings (5 pts.):

A1) From the reading "Educating the Parents," what forms of disruptive behavior are not tolerated?

A2) What procedures are used if a parent causes a problem?

A3) What are the guidelines used in meeting with irate parents?

B1) Based on your reading of "Positive Psychology with Parents," describe the characteristics which make up the "Profile of the Ideal Parent."

Responses to Video Presentations (5 pts.):

C) From the video segment entitled "Proactive Strategies," describe the formal and informal parent meeting. What is the purpose of each?

D) What should be included in a team handbook?

Application Questions (10 pts.):

E) Based on the principles and strategies presented in this module, devise an agenda for meeting with parents of your athletes:

F) Using two of the strategies that you have learned from this course, compose a pre-season letter to the parents of your athletes. This letter should welcome them to the program and give them an idea of your coaching philosophy and style. Explain what concepts you used, and how you integrated them into your letter:

[illegible]

FINAL PROJECT – 20 pts

Operating in a proactive manner is the sign of a coach who understands the challenges of his/her role. It is also a sign that he/she cares enough about the people connected to the program to think about what they might need to know. A proactive strategy to use in encouraging positive parent support is to provide a resource which clearly communicates the philosophy, operation and expectations of the program. To that end, a program handbook can be a valuable tool. After reading the program handbook, parents should have a clear understanding of what they can expect from you and your coaching staff as well as what is expected of the student-athletes and the parents.

Now that you have explored a variety of topics regarding the Parent-Athlete-Coach alliance, develop a handbook to guide parents and athletes through your program/season. The goal of this document should be to enhance the athletes' experience and to assist parents in working as partners with you. The handbook should include the explanations and/or expectations of the items listed below. You are encouraged to provide additional information unique to your own program:

- 1) List of coaching staff with credentials (years experience, degree, college, etc.)
- 2) Tradition/History of program (including record, championships, state appearances, all-conference/all-state players, players who went on to play in college, etc.)
- 3) Coaching Philosophy (This should tell parents how you plan to operate.)
- 4) Program Divisions (varsity, JV, etc. with an explanation of the level, who is eligible to play at that level, etc.)
- 5) Expectations for:
 - a. Practice and competition
 - b. Locker Room (behavior, taking care of it, etc.)
 - c. Attire (practice, travel, competition, etc.)
 - d. Academics (emphasize team academic goals, etc.)
 - e. Student-Athlete Behavior (including following school rules and team rules)
 - f. Nutrition (guidelines and recommendations)

- 6) Playing time (how it is determined, what the general substitution patterns are, etc.)
- 7) How to earn varsity letter, JV letter, etc. (criteria)
- 8) Transportation to/from contests (who provides, rules, etc.)
- 9) Parental Support – ways parents can be involved (team meals, travel meals, ordering apparel, etc.)
- 10) Sportsmanship (expectations for coaches, players, parents)
- 11) Injuries (what are the risks, how are they treated, etc.)
- 12) Post HS opportunities (advice and resources if they are interested)
- 13) Off-season opportunities (camps, clinics, club ball, completion, open gym, etc.)
- 14) Communication guidelines (player-coach, parent-coach, player-parent-coach)
- 15) A schedule of practices and contests (for the entire season)
- 16) Directions to all contest sites

Include your FINAL PROJECT, Program Handbook, as part of your MS Word document for submission to Drake University Distance Learning Center.

EDMA 175 Final Project Rubric - PAC Handbook

Name:

Date:

	Excellent	Good	Emerging	Unacceptable	
	20-18 pts.	17-16 pts.	15-14 pts.	13 and below	Total/Comments
Handbook Content	Handbook incorporates 16 (or more) items as listed in the study guide, including coaching philosophy, athlete expectations, and parental support options. Handbook topics are clearly defined and developed.	Handbook incorporates at least 14 of the items as listed in the study guide, including coaching philosophy, athlete expectations, and parental support options. Handbook topics are clear but lack development.	Handbook incorporates at least 10 of the items as listed in the study guide, including coaching philosophy, athlete expectations, and parental support options. Major points lack clarity and development.	Handbook incorporates less than 10 of the items as listed in the study guide, including coaching philosophy, athlete expectations, and parental support options. Major points are unclear with limited development. Handbook content is weak with insufficient support.	
Application to Coaching Program	Handbook is of professional quality and ready to be distributed. Personal application to coaching style and beliefs explained in specific detail.	Handbook is of good quality and ready to be distributed with minimal changes needed. Personal application to coaching style and beliefs explained in some detail.	Handbook lacks professional quality for distribution. Personal application is irrelevant and lacks detail.	Handbook lacks professional quality for distribution. Personal application lacks relevance and/or is not evident.	
Professional Presentation	Handbook organization is complete and logical with clearly defined categories. Reader can easily identify needed information. Vocabulary is precise. The writing is clear, concise style that flows well. Grammar is error free, with maybe a minor error.	Handbook has a logical progression including defined categories. Reader can find needed information. Vocabulary is appropriate; some phrases need work. Writing is clear, mostly concise style. Grammar is mostly error free, with few errors.	Handbook lacks organization and may be difficult for reader to locate needed information. Vocabulary is weak. Writing is unclear in many instances and does not flow well. There are some grammar errors.	Handbook has no logical organization. Reader has great difficulty identifying information. Ideas are disconnected and flow is disrupted. Vocabulary is inadequate and incorrect. There are many grammar errors.	
Total Points					

Comments:

COURSE EVALUATION

Please click on this link, http://drake.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9NU7ir8noyMxjZb to complete the online Course Evaluation for:

EDMA 175 The Parent Athlete-Coach Alliance

We value your opinion and will use your comments in future offerings.
Thank you!

Note: If clicking on this link does not open your browser and take you to the survey, copy and paste the URL into the address bar of your browser. If you are using Internet Explorer and the link does not work, please try a different browser.

Coursework Submission:

Please see the first download called “Important Information” from your “Welcome” email for the procedure and portal submission link.

Reading Assignments

The Parent-Athlete-Coach Alliance

(EDMA 175)

“Parental Parameters” by Lois Schmidt

“The Parent Team” by Lem Elway

“Educating the Parents” by David Hoch

“Positive Psychology With Parents” by David Hoch

by Lois
Schmitt



PARENTAL PARAMETERS

The Difference Between Pressure and

The words that parents use in communicating with their daughter or son can help make an athlete's sports experience more gratifying or it can add to the stress an athlete may already feel. Although the amount of encouragement needed varies from athlete to athlete, there is a monumental difference between parental pressure and parental encouragement.

Just what is the difference? Webster's Dictionary defines pressure as "the burden of physical or mental distress" and delineates encouragement as inspiring someone "with courage and hope." Undeniably, the dichotomy of the words distress and hope should be enough to trigger any parent to think twice about how he/she treats the athletes in the family.

Parental Focus

Many believe there are at least four areas regarding an athlete's performance that parents focus on - effort, individual encouragement, sportsmanship and teamwork. Whether a parent uses pressure or encouragement in regards to these four situations becomes crucial in developing a well-rounded athlete.

Parents who use pressure, for example, as a means of communicating with their son or daughter concentrate on these areas in the following manner:

- Effort:** Parents do not recognize

the fact that the player or team was attempting development of a skill and focus more on the performance outcome, which may need considerable improvement.

- Individual Encouragement:** Parents do not recognize the need for the athlete to evaluate his or her frustrations. No open discussion is allowed. The parent's judgment is the only "right" opinion.

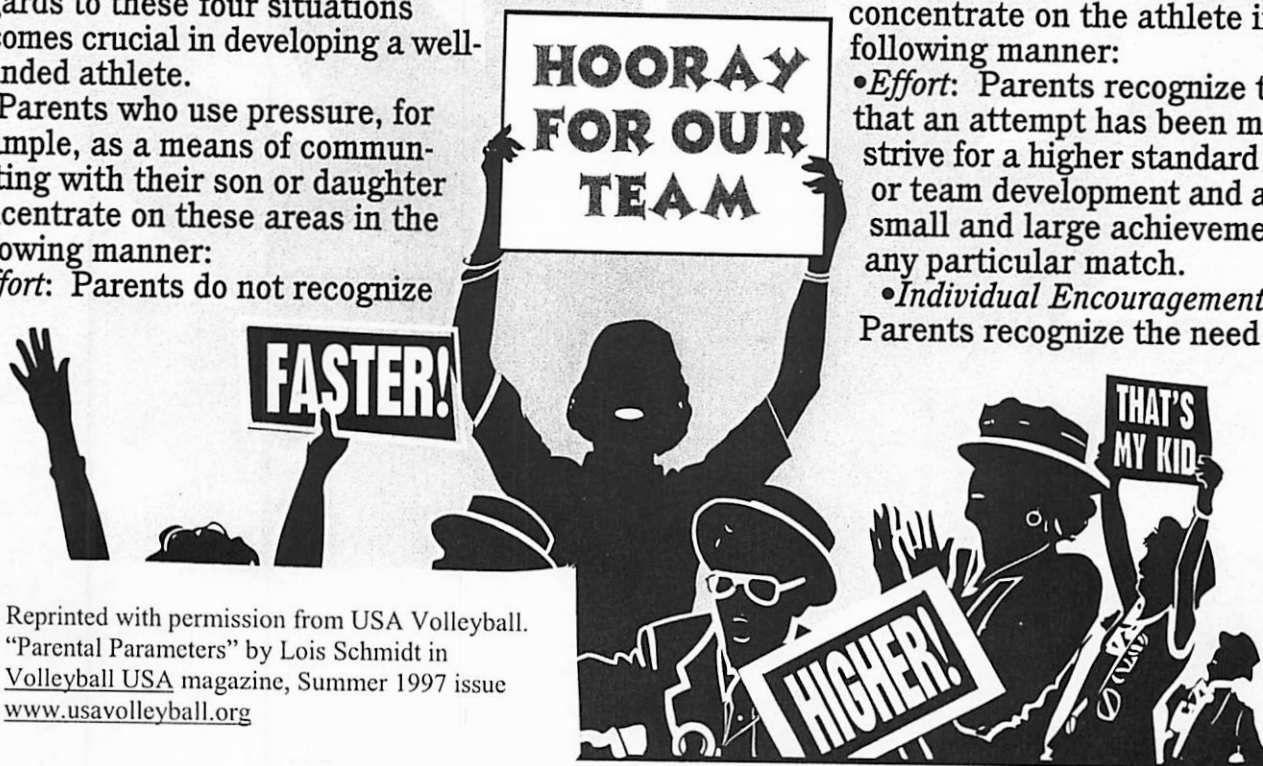
- Sportsmanship:** Parents do not recognize or show support for the coaching staff and degrade game officials or the opponent verbally or with hand gestures.

- Teamwork:** The parent makes judgmental remarks about the athlete's teammates and forces the athlete to minimize respect and appreciation for the performance of others (especially if it is outstanding). This does not allow the athlete to accept responsibility as a member of the team.

Conversely, there is a big difference when parents focus on these four areas using encouragement as a way to inspire their son or daughter. Parents who use encouragement concentrate on the athlete in the following manner:

- Effort:** Parents recognize the fact that an attempt has been made to strive for a higher standard for self or team development and applaud small and large achievements in any particular match.

- Individual Encouragement:** Parents recognize the need for the



Reprinted with permission from USA Volleyball.
"Parental Parameters" by Lois Schmidt in
Volleyball USA magazine, Summer 1997 issue
www.usavolleyball.org

athlete to vent frustration, yet keep their opinions to themselves. The parent allows the athlete to communicate and encourages open discussion without negative criticism.

•**Sportspersonship:** The parent recognizes and shows appreciation for a job well done by the home team and/or the opponent and shows respect for the coaching staff, as well as match officials.

•**Teamwork:** The parent recognizes and shows support for every athlete, coach and support staff on or around the team and does not make judgmental remarks.

The following paragraph is an example to illustrate the above principles and the story helps depict what the pressure parent might say as opposed to how the encouraging parent might comment.

The scene: Your daughter, Kim, comes up to you after a home volleyball match in which her team has lost the fifth game in a close contest. Earlier in the season, your daughter's team had beaten this opponent -- a team which was statistically considered less-talented than Kim's team. One of the reasons this match went into five games -- and was eventually lost -- was that Kim's team was consistently serving out of bounds. Kim, in particular, had a bad night at the serving line. Kim, obviously frustrated, tells you, "I cannot believe we lost to that team. The last time we played them we beat them soundly in three. What was wrong with the team tonight? My serves were off -- nothing seemed to be working for me!"

A parent who uses pressure with their son or daughter might answer in this manner:

•**Effort:** "Why didn't you switch to an underhand serve? You might have gotten that into the court. Don't you think your missed serves were the deciding factor in the game? I do!"

•**Individual Encouragement:** "Boy, was that a frustrating match to watch! I know if I were your coach the only thing you would be doing in practice tomorrow is serving!"

•**Sportspersonship:** "I don't know what your coach was thinking about keeping that line-up in the game, as it obviously wasn't working! Where did they dig up those officials? The other team must have paid them well tonight!"

•**Teamwork:** "Why doesn't your coach bench Alyssa? She is the one who threw the whole team off its game tonight if you ask me! I do

Continued on pg. 20

CHILDREN & SPORTS

In the United States today, 20 million kids participate in organized sports. They compete in sports for a number of reasons, with a myriad of different outcome goals. According to the National Institute for Child Centered Coaching, the top six reasons kids play sports are:

1. to have fun;
2. to improve skills and learn new ones;
3. to be with friends and make new ones;
4. for the excitement of competition;
5. to succeed or win; and
6. to exercise or to become fit.

(From the *Child Centered Coaching Parent Handbook* [p. 3] by Stephen J. Bavolek, the National Institute for Child Centered Coaching, 3160 Pinebrook Road, Park City, UT 84060).

Of course, most people recognize and understand why kids participate in sports. Yet, many people have no inkling as to why they drop out. Many consider it to be laziness. Unfortunately, since parents are a child's No. 1 role models, the parents are often an underlying factor when children drop out of sports. According to the American Sport Education Program (ASEP) publication *SportParent* (1994), kids drop out of sports because of the following:

1. conflict of interest;
2. lack of playing time;
3. lack of interest;
4. little skill improvement;
5. lack of fun;
6. injuries;
7. overemphasis on winning;
8. competitive stress; and
9. too much criticism from the coach.

Parents can help to ensure their children have an enjoyable sport experience by getting involved with their children's activities and encouraging them. As noted in Schmitt's article, there are "pressure parents" and there are "encouraging parents." Learn to become an encouraging parent by following these simple rules.

1. Build your child's sense of self-esteem. Emphasize to your young athletes that winning is not everything. Only one team or competitor can win a competition; as a result, having fun and developing particular skills and abilities are paramount. The challenge is not to eliminate young players but to motivate them.
2. Emphasize skill development over winning. If a child's team loses the game but gets all of their serves in for the first time ever, that is a wonderful accomplishment and a major, important statistic that should be emphasized.
3. Help your child set realistic performance goals. These goals are controllable goals and they will help the athlete to improve. Do not encourage your child to have a goal of winning seven games during the season; rather, encourage him/her to have a goal of digging three or more balls in a match. The performance goals should be specific and achievable, challenging but realistic.

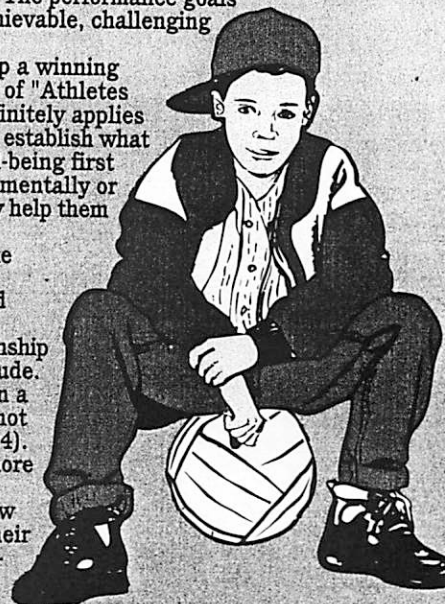
4. Help your child develop a winning perspective. The concept of "Athletes first, winning second" definitely applies in this case. Parents must establish what is best for the child's well-being first (whether it be physically, mentally or emotionally) and what may help them win second.

5. Help your child to make competition healthy. fun, skill development and striving to win.

•Do not sacrifice sportsmanship for a win-at-all-costs attitude.

•Make sports participation a part of your child's life -- not all of it! (*SportParent*, 1994).

When parents become more actively involved in their children's lives -- and know how and where to focus their energies -- it is only a win-win situation for everyone.



not understand why everyone thinks she is such a good hitter -- she just gets lucky."

A parent who uses encouragement with his/her son or daughter would respond very differently.

•*Effort*: "The other team was playing well and they challenged you tonight. Your team is getting better at communicating on the court. I know you are disappointed in your serves, Kim, but you really were digging well and you had a nice night at the net."

•*Individual Encouragement*: "I am not sure what was wrong with the team as a whole tonight, Kim. You were on the court, what do you think?"

•*Sportspersonship*: "The teams seemed to be evenly matched tonight and they (the opponent) seemed to play their hearts out. You have to respect them for that."

•*Teamwork*: "The team as a whole did seem to be having trouble with the serves tonight. However, you did have some nice, long rallies so you are improving in other areas, Kim!"

In this author's opinion, the parent who

uses pressure often ends up hindering rather than helping his/her son or daughter. This athlete often suffers from a lack of self-confidence. Athletes who are pressured are frustrated when they make mistakes and let their frustrations show on their faces, which has a demoralizing effect on their teammates. Athletes who are pressured do not often set long-term goals to improve if they have failed at "perfection" with even the most simple of skills. They look upon the sport as a dreaded task instead of a competition to enjoy.

However, parents who use encouragement with their son or daughter often see a well-rounded athlete. Athletes who are encouraged by their parents have more confidence in themselves and others. They are delighted with short-term and long-term goals -- the pleasure at seeing their first overhand serve soar into the opponent's court to progressing to a consistent jump serve. The athlete will enjoy playing volleyball and will become someone other players and coaches will appreciate having as a teammate.

Lois Schmitt is the volleyball coach at The College of St. Catherine in Bloomington, Minn. She is a CAP Level II accredited coach.



The Parent Team

BY LEM ELWAY

Today's coach has to deal with a secondary team not on the roster: players' parents. Here's how to work with this diverse and demanding group.

ONE OF THE MOST OVERLOOKED aspects of coaching is dealing with parents. From the dad who has coached his daughter throughout youth leagues to the mom who doesn't understand why her slow-footed daughter isn't starting ("But

Coach, she hasn't missed one practice!"), parents rarely accept their children's lot in sports just because someone says so.

This generation of moms and dads wants logical explanations for every action a coach takes. They have questions about why certain decisions are made and concerns about how the

coach's actions affect their child. Handling these situations correctly can make for a positive experience, but if handled incorrectly, they can cause a lot of sleepless nights.

For many coaches, their first response is to tell parents not to interfere. But this strategy usually backfires. It simply makes the parents distrust the coach. I've found a better solution is to educate the parents on their role and the procedures for raising questions.

Communicate Roles

The first step in educating parents is delineating roles. It helps immensely when parents know their responsibilities

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as well as those of the players and coaches. These may vary depending on your particular school and support staff, but I'll explain how I break it down in my program as an example. (See "Rules on Roles," below, for a complete list.)

The role of the coaches is to be the leaders and communicators. They lead by acting professionally at all times, being good teachers, making fair rules and decisions, staying organized, and setting a good example through all their actions. As communicators, they must exhibit good listening skills, be available to players and parents, clearly outline rules and expectations, and be in touch with all administrative guidelines. Another constant responsibility of the coach is to reduce all risks associated with the game and follow safety rules. And, finally, coaches alone decide on playing time and strategy.

The role of the parents is to be a support system for the players and coaches. This entails respecting the rules and decisions made by those in charge, staying positive about every aspect of the team and all of its players, and keeping any negative thoughts to themselves. It also

entails thoroughly understanding the role of the coaches and knowing not to interfere with that role.

The role of the players is to be a responsible member of the team. This includes having a good attitude, following team rules, and asking questions of the coach when needed.

Being Proactive

Once you've outlined the responsibilities of the three major groups, you need to communicate to each person the roles everyone plays. With players and assistant coaches, there are plenty of opportunities to talk about roles and responsibilities, but with parents, you need a more proactive plan.

The first step is accepting parental involvement as part of the job. It is very important to make parents feel comfortable about asking questions and to provide good answers. We all know that a good portion of parents who ask questions will never be thoroughly satisfied, but as coaches, we need to provide the answers, whether they are accepted or not.

Coaches also need to be ready to justify

their actions when dealing with players (which also helps to ensure that we are doing the right things in all situations). We need to be ready to respond to the disagreeable parent. And we need to be patient with the parent who has coached and thus thinks he or she is an expert on the game.

At the same time, we need to realize that most parents' experiences are very limited. Something that seems obvious to a coach may need extra explanation to a parent. In addition, parents, by nature, have tunnel vision—they see only their child's needs and don't have the ability to be objective when dealing with a situation. The reality is that it falls on the coach's shoulders to educate and lead parents through this experience.

Team Meetings

Being proactive in dealing with parents also means opening up the lines of communication from day one. I do this by setting up group meetings with parents. I may have three or four such meetings throughout a season. This may seem like a lot of extra work, but it actually reduces the number of one-on-one

RULES ON ROLES

A great way to get parents to become positive members of your support system is to get them to understand their role, as well as the role of the coaches and the players. In no particular order, here is how I outline responsibilities for my players' parents:

COACHES' ROLES:

1. Set a good example for players and fans to follow.
2. Be positive, fair, and consistent with the players.
3. Make playing time and strategy decisions with thought and care.
4. Establish and organize practice for the team on a daily basis.
5. Be a good communicator with players and parents.
6. Protect the safety of all athletes.
7. Know and employ injury-prevention procedures.
8. Make sure players know expectations, procedures, rules, and lettering requirements for the program.

9. Make sure everyone has practice and game schedules.
10. Be a professional practitioner, stay current with X's and O's.
11. Keep inventory of equipment.
12. Work to help assistants improve.
13. Keep track of the academic progress of athletes.
14. Be available to talk with players and parents.

PARENTS' ROLES:

1. Be a fan of everyone on the team.
2. Respect the decisions of officials.

3. Respect other fans, coaches, and players.
4. Talk to your child if she has any questions and, if she still has questions, contact the coach through agreed-upon athletic department procedures.
5. Keep any negative thoughts about a coach, the program, or teammates to yourself.
6. Don't talk to coaches on game day about a complaint.
7. Understand that the coaches' responsibility is to make certain that students are safe and become better people and athletes, not to win every game.
8. Be supportive of your child.

PLAYERS' ROLES:

1. Be positive and have a good attitude.
2. Support their teammates.
3. Work hard.
4. If they have any questions, ask the coach.
5. Know and follow school and team rules.
6. Challenge themselves as an athlete and a person.
7. Meet classroom expectations.
8. Notify the coach of any scheduling conflicts in advance.
9. Talk to the coach about any special concerns.

— L.E.

discussions I need to have with parents.

I start with a preseason meeting for potential players and their parents before tryouts begin. I cover tryout

expectations and procedures: the responsibilities of coaches, players, and parents (as outlined above); and my coaching philosophy. I also explain

some of the details that come with making the team: paperwork that parents have to fill out, dates of future parents' meetings, procedures players need to

DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

THE FOLLOWING ARE TWO SAMPLES OF PROBLEMS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM:

Parent: *My daughter has spent four years in the program and she deserves a chance to play. Because you don't like me you're taking it out on my daughter.*

As coaches, we have to make subjective decisions that parents will question in inappropriate ways. The first thing to do is take a deep breath and remember not to get heated by the "because you don't like me" part of the parent's statement. In fact, it's probably best to ignore it completely.

Instead, make sure you have fair procedures on how you choose who gets to play and calmly explain these guidelines to the parent. Show the parent your evaluation notes

on the player and how her skills (or attitude or competitiveness) don't measure up to the other players. You might also explain that, even though the player doesn't get much playing time, her role on the team is still critical.

Finally, don't waver in your judgment and don't get off topic. No matter what the parent does to push your buttons, always bring the discussion back to the athlete and her specific abilities.

Parent: *For two years, my daughter started at outside hitter for you and did everything asked of her. Now, as a senior, she has a chance to make all-league, but mostly sits on the bench while a sophomore is starting. This is really devastating for her!*

It's always a tough call whether to start a younger player over an upperclassman. But, if you've analyzed the situation and truly feel the sophomore is a greater asset to the team on the court, then you've got to tell the parent the realities of the situation.

Gently explain that the athlete has been a great contributor to the team, and still is, but that this other player improved by huge strides over the past year, while their daughter did not. Explain that the varsity team is a competitive situation and there are younger players eager to take the starting spot away from every senior. Maybe you can even convince the parent that there's a lesson for the child in all this: to never be complacent with the status quo.

—L.E.

follow, and game schedules for all levels.

This is not a time when I answer many questions. Rather, it sets the tone that, as the head coach, I am in charge and these are my rules.

After the final roster is set, and periodically throughout the season, I hold additional parents' meetings. This is a time for me to further explain procedures or address new circumstances that have arisen. And, unlike the pre-season meeting, it also allows parents a forum to express their concerns and give me feedback on the program.

I use a printed agenda so we stay on track. The topics change depending on the time of year and what situations have arisen, but they mostly focus on what rules we have and why. For example, I might talk about why some players are on j.v. instead of varsity, expectations of players during games and on bus trips, the consequences of missing practices, and my expectations of the team.

Allowing a lot of time for parents to ask questions is key. The important thing is that they don't feel embarrassed to ask something. I don't want them to have that excuse, so I try to let them know I'm open to any and all questions. During these meetings we have the parents sign in so we know who was there and who was not. That way, if an issue comes up from one of our disruptive parents we can say, "If it was that important to you, why didn't you come to one of the meetings?"

I've found these meetings clear up many of the misconceptions parents may have. Most important, though, they create an environment of openness, which most parents equate with fairness.

Outlining Rules

Although these group meetings usually set the right tone and answer the questions of most parents, a handful of very involved parents will have individual questions and concerns. They will want to talk with you, argue with you, and challenge you. And you will have to deal with them in a positive manner.

Therefore, as a smart coach, it is important to educate parents on how, when, and why to communicate with you. In addition, they need to understand the guidelines for obtaining information so that it's done professionally and positively rather than as a confrontation. I've found that the more

guidelines I give parents on how they should communicate with me, the better these discussions go.

First, I ask them to do a little thinking. "If you have a question or concern," I tell them, "please take the time to first think about what your question is. If it ultimately has to do with playing time or game strategy, keep it to yourself." Otherwise, I ask them to follow our athletic department's three-step process:

1. If appropriate, talk with your daughter about your question. What is

your child's perspective? Can your child solve the problem herself?

2. Set up a meeting with the coach if you still have questions. This should be an informational meeting where you ask questions, listen, and have a discussion. Remember that the coach makes decisions for the good of the team based on practice, ability, attitude, and chemistry.

3. If questions remain, set up a meeting with the athletic director, coach, and yourself.

For any of these meetings, I also explain four simple guidelines:

1. Conversation must be in a professional manner with regard to both language and conduct.
2. Everyone gets a chance to talk, but everyone must listen as well.
3. Emotional control by all parties is imperative.
4. Meetings must not occur on game days, but rather by appointment.

Finally, I also give parents guidelines on what questions are appropriate and how they might ask them in a positive manner. For example, it's fine to ask about the treatment of their child. They might ask, "What was your reasoning for doing what you did in this situation involving my child?" or "Were there any situations or conditions that led up to this?"

They are also welcome to ask about how their child can improve. I give them examples about how to best phrase these questions:

- "How would you evaluate my child in terms of her offensive, defensive, and team skills?"

- "Does my child work hard and have a positive attitude at practice?"

- "What areas does she need to improve in?"

- "Do you have some drills we could use to make these improvements?"

Asking about their child's behavior or attitude is also acceptable. They may ask, "Is my child a positive addition to

I explain to parents that these three areas are out of bounds for discussion. I remind them that the coaches alone will decide playing time and strategy. I also emphasize that it's inappropriate to discuss other players on the team.

Dealing with and educating individuals within an organization is an ongoing process and must be done in a proactive

As a smart coach, it is important to educate parents on how, when, and why to communicate with you I've found that the more guidelines I give parents on how they should communicate with me, the better these discussions go.

the team?" or "Is there something I can do to help you?"

Just as important is delineating what not to ask. This may seem redundant, but the more you say it to parents, the better it will sink in.

THINGS NOT TO ASK ABOUT:

1. Playing time
2. Game strategies
3. Other players

manner. Coaches must encourage communication and make the process comfortable and positive for everyone. Being questioned in a forthright manner can be a growing process for a coach and should not be shied away from. ■

A version of this article is also appearing in our current issues of Coaching Management-Basketball and Coaching Management-Baseball.

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EDUCATING THE PARENTS

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SCHOOLEASTERN TECHNICAL HIGH
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ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS Ensuring attendance at pre-fall meetings and dealing with parental disruptions at games

As reported in this department last April, we have been attempting to enlighten the parents of our athletes through pre-season parents' nights, a special handbook, and a quarterly newsletter.

This trifold mix has produced very successful results, plus one other thing--some excellent questions. For example, what happens if one of our coaches fails to show up at a pre-season parents' meeting?

We all understand, of course, that a program, to be successful, must be supported by the coaches--a requirement that has the full approval of our principal. Only one of our 51 coaches has ever missed a session.

What happened to him? His dereliction was recorded in his annual evaluation record. Since he had been informed of the requirement, expectations, and possible ramifications, he was warned that a second offense might cost him his job.

Many of the athletes at Eastern Tech play more than one sport and usually begin participating in their freshman year, at which time their parents begin attending the pre-season meetings.

Human nature being what it is, our parents tend to begin slacking off after their first meeting. After all, they had attended a meeting and been enlightened. Why go again?

This problem is passed on to the coaches. We want them to constantly impress the parents with the importance of the meetings and encourage them to attend them.

Each sport is different, each season is different, and each coach is different. The fact that the athletes change from year to year presents a challenge to the coach, who must communicate it to the parents. Interestingly enough, the most committed coaches understand this concept and work hardest at it--producing the highest parental turnouts.

DEALING WITH DISRUPTION

Question: How do we deal with disruptive parents at a game?

First, what do we mean by "being disruptive?" The definition may vary with the sport. For example, the behavior at a baseball game should hardly be appropriate at a tennis match.

The following forms of disruptive behavior are forbidden at Eastern Tech contests:

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1. Inappropriate or foul language directed at coaches and fans.
2. Excessive berating of officials, though a little tolerance should be exercised. An occasional "That was a bad call," may be overlooked, but extremely loud, disapproving expressions probably will draw a warning.
3. Taunting opposing players, coaches and fans.
4. Lack of cooperation represents another form of disruptive behavior. Not remaining in the bleachers during a contest, refusing to leave a specific, restricted area, or attempting to bring food or drink into the gym are three examples of "lack of cooperation."

What if a parent causes a problem? We have created the following procedures:

1. Remind the parent that his behavior is unacceptable and explain the consequences of a repeat offense.
2. If the behavior persists, ask the parent (nicely) to leave the contest. This incident is recorded on the parent's signoff sheet and becomes part of his/her permanent record (Chart 1).
3. If the parent refuses to leave or causes a commotion, we have the parent removed from the contest. Faculty members, another administrator, or, as a last resort, a police officer may be called upon to help evict the offender.
4. This action is followed up with a letter to the parent explaining that such behavior will not be tolerated and that our sportsmanship expectations had been explained in our pre-season meeting, listed in our handbook, and been approved by the parents.
5. Upon a second infraction, the parent will be notified by letter (often directly from the principal) that he (parent) is being banished from all future contests.

We do not list these steps in our handbook to avoid sounding repetitive, and we hope, of course, that the penalties will never be imposed. Other schools may choose to publish their own courses of actions.

We always remind ourselves that such courses involve only a small group of parents. The large majority of parents are positive, supportive, and appreciative of our programs and efforts.

INFORMATION SHEETS

We are always looking for ways in which to communicate with our parents, particularly in early fall after the long summer hiatus.

We believe in preparing an informational sheet consisting of the date, time, starting sites for the fall sports, and the names of the coaches and how parents can contact them. (See Chart 2.)

This sheet is distributed to the parents at our spring open house for incoming freshmen. It is also included in the summer issue of our newsletter and at the meeting of candidates for each fall sport.

Additional copies are available in our main office for the parents who stop by over the summer or when they call for information.

Even with the best of educational programs for parents, you will still find irate adults. We have one of our graduate counselors help us develop a procedure that deals with this special group of parents.

1. Meet with them in a private place, preferably an office, not on the field or court.
2. Listen to their complaints or concerns, and take mental notes as you go along: Wait until they finish before making any comments.
3. Find some common ground with them and stay as positive as possible.
4. Avoid the following:
 5. generalizations about the parent's motivation, attitude, or character.
 6. extreme statements such as "You never ..." or "You always ..."
 7. judgmental, moralistic, accusatory, or blaming statements.
 8. Avoid diversionary statements or "facts." Say it this way:
 9. "It seems to me ..." or;
 10. "As I recall ..."

We communicate the specific changes we are recommending and how they will help the program.

Though these tools were created for our situation and setting, you should find them easy to adapt to your situation. We would also advise you to revise the handbook constantly in order to stay current and address new issues or problems.

With the help of a computer and photocopier (our monster photocopier will print on both sides, collate, and staple in just one operation), there is no reason to keep outdated handbooks on the shelf. Within minutes, you will be able to update anything.

Like many other schools, we also make up separate handbooks for our coaches, consisting of procedural items, state regulations, and all the pertinent information they need.

Since the needs and expectations of our coaches are different, they have to be treated separately.

However, the education of the parents and administrators remains a key element in the establishment of a successful athletic program.

Keep working at it and your efforts will be rewarded.

Chart 1

EASTERN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

As a candidate for -----, I have read and understand the following statements:

1. Team rules
2. Requirements to earn a letter
3. Criteria used to cut the squad
4. Athletic Dept.'s Team Travel Policy
5. Athletic Dept.'s Post-Practice & Game Responsibilities Policy
6. Athletic Dept.'s policy for an Athlete Changing Teams

(athlete) -----

(parent) -----

(date) -----

(date) -----

Chart 2

EASTERN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Fall Sports Practice Information

(All Sports Start August 15, 1998)

FOOTBALL

- Varsity: Nick Armino, head coach, phone 391-2553 1st Practice--meet at 8 p.m., cafeteria; Practice begins 9 p.m., varsity field
- JV: Ken King (same as Varsity) phone 238-1967

VOLLEYBALL

GIRLS

- Varsity: Wrae Wene, head coach 1st Practice--9:30 a.m., Gym #1
- JV: Yvonne Fabella, head coach (same as above)

SOCCER

BOYS

- Varsity: Peter Gluademans, head coach 1st Practice--8:30 a.m., boys field
- JV: Rob Manogue, 11:30 a.m., boys field

GIRLS

- Varsity: Wendy Butz, head coach, phone 538-5772 1st Practice--9-11 a.m., lobby
- JV: TBA

If a phone no. is not listed for a coach, call the high school and leave a message.

Same form is used for Badminton. Cross-Country, Golf, Field Hockey, and Cheerleading

~~~~~  
By Dr. David Hoch, Director of Athletics, Eastern Technical H.S., Baltimore County (MD)

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## Positive Psychology With Parents

DEALING WITH PARENTS is often the most difficult and frustrating aspect of athletic administration. So much so that it has become a major factor in the unexpected resignations of coaches and ADs.

Like most ADs, we have tried to be proactive in tackling this problem. Our major endeavor has been the organization of a series of preseason parent meetings in which we have articulated our expectations from them in connection with our programs.

We have also produced a Handbook for Parents of Athletes and a quarterly newsletter. Most recently, we have begun to make greater use of our Web page.

All of this has helped, but we still haven't been able to eradicate the negative disruptive parental expectations. It remains a continual battle and we are always looking for ways to win it.

A few months ago while watching a parent yell in exasperation at his kid during a basketball game, a light bulb lit up: Don't you catch more bees with honey than with vinegar?

Remember Norman Vincent Peale's beliefs in the Power of Positive Thinking? Why not try it on the parents of your athletes? Think about it: Don't we usually burden our parents with a lot of "Thou Shalt Nots?" Like "Don't do this" or "Don't do that" or "You can't do so and so". How often do such negatives produce the desired results?

Couldn't we get our message across better by simply stating the desired outcomes? With this in mind, we produced a single-page handout titled *The Profile of the Ideal Parent*, which we distributed at our pre-season meetings and published in our newsletters and posted on our Web site. It contained the following positive expectations from our parents:

1. Support your child and attend as many contests as possible.
2. Avoid putting pressure on your offspring to start, score, or be the star of the team.
3. Support the coach in public around other parents and fans.
4. Avoid speaking negatively about the coach in front of your child. It may create a major barrier in the child's hope for improvement in the sport.
5. Understand the ultimate purpose of athletics. It exists as an integral part of the total educational mission of the school, and participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right.
6. Serve as good role models for the students, athletes, and other fans.
7. Contribute as members of the booster club. This means volunteering to help with projects and committees.
8. Appreciate the educational opportunity that your child is receiving in our athletic program. This includes the enormous time and effort provided by the coach.
9. Attend the pre-season parents' meeting and read our Handbook for Parents of Athletes and our quarterly newsletters.
10. Serve as beacons of good sportsmanship.
11. Show respect to everyone involved in high school athletics--the coach, athletes, fans, officials, and administrators.
12. Follow the chain of command at Eastern Tech when you have a concern.
13. Express concerns and questions in a courteous and civil manner and do it at the right time and in the proper setting.



- 14. Abide by all politics, regulations, and procedures for our athletic program.
- 15. Understand that the goals of the team and athletic program are more important than the hopes and dreams you have for your child.
- 16. Avoid constant and chronic complaining.

By creating and using this profile, we didn't have to lecture or dwell upon negative behavior. Instead, we presented the positive qualities and approaches that we would like to see. We created guidelines for our parents to follow.

Since your situation may be a little different than ours, you may want to add a few other expectations to the list. The positive approach may provide you with a lot of answers.

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